

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 184086

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 USIA-06 /019 R

DRAFTED BY NE/ARN:MHMAUGHAN:JFC

APPROVED BY NEA - MR. SOBER

NEA/ARN - MR. DAY

CU/NEA - MR. NEWBERRY (DRAFT)

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R 042306Z AUG 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 184086

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP (KHADDAM), US, SY

SUBJECT: TRAVEL IN U.S. BY SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM

FOR AMBASSADOR MURPHY

1. DURING KHADDAM'S JUNE VISIT, YOU MENTIONED THAT HE HAD EXPRESSED INTEREST IN TRIP THROUGH U.S. AT TIME OF UNGA. WE HAVE SKETCHED OUT POSSIBLE ITINERARY. FOLLOWING YOUR SUGGESTIONS, IT INCLUDES MEETINGS WITH PRESS AND VISITS TO A GOOD CROSS-SECTION OF UNIVERSITIES WITH MAJOR NEAR EAST STUDIES PROGRAMS; SCHEDULE WOULD INCLUDE BOSTON (HARVARD AND/OR M.I.T.), PHILADELPHIA (U. OF PENN.), PRINCETON (PRINCETON U.), ANN ARBOR (U. OF MICHIGAN), CHICAGO (U. OF CHICAGO), SALT LAKE CITY (U. OF UTAH), AND LOS ANGELES (UCLA). PRESS INTERVIEWS CAN BE ARRANGED AT EACH STOP; APPEARANCE ON "MEET THE PRESS" MAY BE POSSIBLE IN NEW YORK. ADDITIONALLY, WE COULD ARRANGE MEETING (PERHAPS A DINNER) WITH SYRIAN COMMUNITY IN DETROIT AND POSSIBLY LUNCHEON OR OTHER CEREMONIAL WITH MAYOR DALEY IN CHICAGO. SUGGEST KHADDAM MAY ALSO WANT TO MEET WITH COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS OR SIMILAR GROUP WHILE IN CALIFORNIA, AND SPEND A DAY VISITING SAN FRANCISCO.

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2. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VIEWS AS TO WHETHER KHADDAM STILL INTERESTED IN TRAVEL WITHIN U.S., ACCEPTABILITY OF SUGGESTED ITINERARY (E.G. SHOULD THERE BE MORE SIGHT-SEEING AND FEWER UNIVERSITIES) AND EXPECTED DATES FOR SUCH A TRIP.

3. FYI: WE ASSUME SARG WILL FUND KHADDAM'S TRIP. SINCE HE WILL DOUBTLESS BE MAKING STATEMENTS AT HIS VARIOUS STOPS THAT COULD PROVE CONTENTIOUS, AND SINCE HE MAY BE LEAVING BEHIND IN NEW YORK ACTIVE SYRIAN EFFORT TO SUSPEND ISRAEL FROM UN, PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL REACTION TO FUNDING BY USG WOULD RAISE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS THAT WE WOULD PREFER TO AVOID IF POSSIBLE. END FYI.

4. WE CAN PROCEED WITH DEFINITE ARRANGEMENTS AS SOON AS WE RECEIVE INFORMATION REQUESTED ABOVE. PLEASE ADVISE. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE184086
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MHMAUGHAN:JFC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750269-0611
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750883/aaaacvwi.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 AUG 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <05 DEC 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRAVEL IN U.S. BY SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM FOR AMBASSADOR MURPHY
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, US, SY, (KHADDAM, ABD AL-HALIM)
To: DAMASCUS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006